



Resolve

Volume 4, Issue 2

April, 2014

The InterLocal Conflict Resolution Group (ILCRG) is a consortium of government agencies, labor unions, non-profits, and volunteer professionals jointly formed by King County and the King County Labor Council to offer mediation to its members at no cost.

This shared neutrals program affords the opportunity for member agencies and unions to draw from a pool of mediators who have no direct relationship to the disputes. As a result, sensitive issues that require confidentiality and neutrality can be mediated by qualified professionals.

Inside this issue:

Challenging Behaviors in Interpersonal Mediation (continued) 2

Mediator After Hours 3

Did You Know...? 3

Kudos Korner 3

UPDATED 2014 4

Training Calendar

Volunteer Appreciation Lunch 4

Challenging Behaviors In Interpersonal Mediation

By Kathleen Nichols and Ann McBroom

Last year, almost two-thirds of the cases mediated at the King County ADR/Interlocal were interpersonal in some form – employee/employee, employee/supervisor – with issues around communication, work styles, intergenerational, intercultural. As Ann McBroom wrote in the December 2013 issue of Resolve, the program is putting

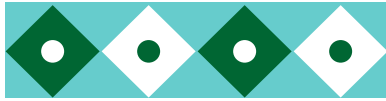


a special focus on these types of cases, attempting to isolate elements that contribute to increased long-term positive changes in workplace relationships, and offering advanced trainings in techniques effective for interpersonal cases.

We recognize that not all situations are suitable for mediation, but we also hold the hope that once people are given a forum for improving their workplace relationships they are likely to succeed. In interpersonal cases, we are more likely to encounter people who, for whatever reason, are not willing or not able to engage in the process effectively. In these situations, the mediator will need to balance their hopeful stance with the important premise of “do no harm.”

There are signs and behaviors that mediators can notice which may indicate that the situation is not suitable for mediation, or that you may need to try different techniques. Periodically, the program offers an in-service on how to manage conflict personalities in mediation. “Conflict personalities” is a generic term applied to people who are found to be abnormally and excessively difficult to get along with in everyday life. While we never want to act as diagnosticians, having some background information about these challenging personality types may help us understand puzzling behavior during mediation and offer additional strategies.

(continued on page 2)



Challenging Behaviors in Mediation

(continued)

Our thanks to program volunteer, Pam Wyss, King County EAP Manager, for an in-depth discussion of four types of personality disorders that can be described as conflict personalities (to access the full article online, go to www.kingcounty.gov/adr/NewslettersArticles). The article provides information on signs and that you may be dealing with a conflict personality, as well as specific techniques with these individuals that may help move the parties. These are the most difficult people mediators will encounter, and without careful attention, the mediation session may actually do more harm than good.

As a general rule, when you are mediating and one or more of the parties is unable or unwilling to demonstrate elements of good faith AT ALL, the situation is probably not suitable for mediation. Some of the same behaviors found in the 4 “conflict personalities” show up as a lack of good faith behavior in mediation. If you are finding these elements lacking in spite of your intervention efforts, you will want to consider the balance of hope and harm and put closure to the mediation. Look at the chart below, which will be in every mediation file on the back of your “Mediator Sign-off Form.” If you notice that you are seeing “Not at All” in a number of these categories, you will want to confer with your co-mediator and consider calling the mediation.

	Not at all	Somewhat	Significantly	Completely
Listen to the other person				
Consider other interests and points of view				
Acknowledge their own contribution to conflict				
Respond to mediator cues				
Modify their behavior during mediation				
Discuss ideas for an improved future				
Share relevant information				

How can you end a mediation gracefully? That is always tough, but we thought of some language you might find helpful:

“Not all situations are ripe for mediation. After conferring, we don’t see the necessary ingredients for moving this process forward in a productive way. We are happy to meet with both of you individually before you leave to coach you on how to move forward even though you have not found your solution together today.”

We will be using your perceptions about the parties’ readiness and ability to mediate in our analysis of what works and what doesn’t for long-lasting interpersonal resolutions. The program is now collecting both pre- and post-mediation survey information (one month after mediation), in addition to the evaluations done at the end of a mediation session. This additional piece of information can help us analyze the data, and we appreciate your willingness to check the appropriate boxes as part of the Mediator Sign-off.



Mediator After Hours

Come join us from 3:30–5:00 pm on May 21 in room 115 to learn about and discuss the Restorative Justice projects the ADR staff and volunteers have been involved in. Then we'll head over to O'Asian (800 5th Avenue, Suite Plaza 1, P level) for conversation, canapés and cocktails.

DID YOU KNOW...?

...that on the ADR program website - www.kingcounty.gov/adr - you have access to:

- ◆ Program forms - including Agreement to Mediate, Opening Statement Checklists, Settlement Agreements, Feedback forms, and all forms needed for a mediation session
- ◆ A calendar of Trainings and Events, showing dates, times, locations
- ◆ The past year or so of ADR Program Newsletters
- ◆ Articles of interest to mediators
- ◆ Phone numbers and contact information for ADR Program Staff

...that the ADR Program has a laptop and portable printer for mediators' use in drafting agreements. Just let Kathleen know if you'd like to use them, and we'll get it set up in the mediation room or, if the mediation is scheduled off-site, we'll pack it up in the "mediation-to-go bag".

DID YOU NOTICE...?

...that the mediators have been assigned to many of the recent mediations and you've never seen a request for mediators? In an effort to bring our practicum members to mastery, all four program staff will share their wealth of experience by mentoring volunteers more frequently. The goal is to move volunteers through the practicum more quickly, giving trainees a more concentrated experience. We're focusing now on 2010 Basic Training graduates and some volunteers that offer background and experience needed by the program.



KUDOS KORNER

Congratulations to our newest Certified Mediators: Selina Chow, Preston Hampton and Anne Vold.

A special thank you to our Debra Oliver, Marcella Wilson, Dane Keehn, Deb Robinson, and Jon Stier, our 2014 POD Leaders. Their willingness to give of their time and to share their knowledge and experience has added great value to the program.



ILCRG 2014 TRAINING CALENDAR

Date	Room(s)	Time	Session
February 25	Chinook Rm.123	9:00 am to 12 noon	Co-Mediation
June 4 & 5	Selig Bldg, 301 Fifth Ave Room 825	8:30 am to 4:30 pm	Interpersonal Conflict Resolution 2-day Training
June 23*	Chinook Rm. 123	11:30 am to 1:00 pm	Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon
July 16	Chinook Rm.123	8:30 am to 12 noon 1:00 pm to 4:30 pm	The Negotiation Phase Writing Durable Agreements
September 3	Chinook Rm.123	8:30 am to 12 noon 1:00 pm to 4:30 pm	Presence and Authenticity Developing Empathy
November 14	Chinook Rm. 123	8:30 am to 12 noon 1:00 pm to 4:30 pm	Guest Speaker(s) TBD Guest Speaker(s) TBD

***NOTE NEW DATE - JUNE 23 - FOR VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION LUNCH**

Please remember to RSVP for trainings and to let us know as soon as you become aware that you won't be able to attend. Class sizes are limited, and there is often a waiting list. If you don't cancel, another volunteer misses out!



REMINDER JUNE 23rd IS PARTY DAY!

*Hope you've saved the date for the
2014 Volunteer Appreciation Lunch*

Monday, June 23rd from 11:30 am to 1 pm

Come join your fellow ILCRG mediators as we show appreciation for the great work of the volunteers. It's a time to reconnect, recognize achievements, and have a delicious lunch prepared by staff for your enjoyment.